



Rural and Renewable Energy Agency (RREA)
Securing modern energy access for all Liberians

**Liberia Electricity Sector Strengthening and Access Project
(LESSAP)-Phase 2**

**Capacity Needs Assessment Manual for RREA Staff
Project: – Off-grid Component (LESSAP Phase I)**

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Meaning
E&S	Environmental and Social
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPML	Environmental Protection and Management Law
ESAMI	Eastern and Southern African Management Institute
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESS	Environmental and Social Standards
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GIMPA	Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
LESSAP	Liberia Electricity Sector Strengthening and Access Project
LIPA	Liberia Institute of Public Administration
LIRENAP	Liberia Renewable Energy Access Project
MoG	Ministry of Gender
MoL	Ministry of Labor
NEBOSH	National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health
ODK	Open Data Kit
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
RREA	Rural and Renewable Energy Agency
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
WB	World Bank

0.0 Executive Summary

This Capacity Needs Assessment Manual has been developed by the Rural and Renewable Energy Agency (RREA) to strengthen the operational readiness of its Environmental and Social (E&S) Unit in preparation for the implementation of the Liberia Electricity Sector Strengthening and Access Project (LESSAP) Phase II. Building on insights from LESSAP Phase I and other donor-financed projects such as the Liberia Renewable Energy Access Project (LIRENAP) and the Lighting Lives Liberia Project, this manual identifies current staffing capabilities, highlights priority capacity gaps, and proposes a tailored Capacity Development Plan aligned with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework and relevant national regulatory frameworks.

The assessment revealed key gaps in environmental and social safeguards delivery, particularly the absence of a formally recruited Environmental Safeguard Specialist following unforeseen circumstances. The Social Safeguard Specialist, with over 27 years of professional experience (12 of those years served exclusively at RREA), has temporarily assumed both environmental and social responsibilities. While his leadership has ensured continuity, the expanding technical scope of LESSAP Phase II requires dedicated environmental expertise, strengthened mentorship systems, and structured professional development.

Junior staff members—including a Social Safeguard Assistant, Gender Assistant, Environmental Assistant, and Occupational Health and Safety Intern—bring between two to four years of field-based experience and possess academic qualifications in biology, environmental science, and economics. However, there remains a need to improve their practical application of the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standards (ESS), strengthen their capacity to use digital tools such as the Kobo Toolbox and Open Data Kit (ODK), and support their ability to engage effectively with key government agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, the Ministry of Gender, and the Ministry of Labor.

An emerging challenge highlighted during the assessment is the issue of electronic waste (e-waste) management, particularly under off-grid electrification programs. With no formal regulatory framework currently in place at the national level, the E&S Unit requires immediate capacity-building to ensure the early identification, monitoring, and safe handling of e-waste associated with battery storage systems and solar infrastructure.

In response to these challenges, RREA has developed a structured and phased Capacity Development Plan. This plan outlines role-specific training in core thematic areas including Environmental and Social Standards application, contractor supervision, grievance redress mechanisms, gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse prevention, integration of safeguards into procurement processes, and digital reporting. Additionally, the plan promotes structured mentorship between senior and junior staff, enhanced climate resilience integration, and strengthened interagency coordination. A total budget of fifty-nine thousand United States dollars (USD 59,000) has been proposed to

support these activities, including training implementation, logistics, and Occupational Health and Safety certification.

To ensure effectiveness, the manual includes detailed monitoring and evaluation framework designed to track training outcomes, assess the application of knowledge in field contexts, and support continuous improvement. Through this comprehensive approach, RREA aims to ensure that its Environmental and Social Unit is not only prepared to meet the requirements of LESSAP Phase II but is also equipped to lead with accountability, technical competence, and inclusive practice in Liberia's energy sector.

1. Introduction

The Capacity Needs Assessment Manual has been developed by RREA as part of the preparatory efforts for the Liberia Electricity Sector Strengthening and Access Project (LESSAP) Phase II, with a specific focus on enhancing the E&S Unit at the RREA. The goal of this manual is to ensure that RREA's E&S team is fully equipped to implement and monitor safeguards in compliance with both national regulations and the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF).

LESSAP Phase II builds on the achievements and lessons learned from LESSAP Phase I, as well as other donor-funded initiatives like the Liberia Renewable Energy Access Project (LIRENAP), Yandohun Mini-Hydro Project and the Lighting Lives Liberia Project.

The manual is designed to address capacity gaps within the E&S Unit, ensuring that RREA is prepared to manage environmental and social risks effectively, engage with communities, and oversee contractors in line with international best practices and regulatory requirements. It provides an overview of the current staffing and functional capacity of the E&S Unit, identifies gaps in skills and resources, and outlines a Capacity Development Plan that includes specific training, tools, and procedures to enhance staff performance.

This manual emphasizes the need for institutional strengthening, particularly in stakeholder engagement, gender mainstreaming, e-waste management, and contractor oversight. The training plan is structured to improve the E&S Unit's ability to assess risks, ensure compliance with environmental and social standards, and ensure that the project is implemented in an inclusive, gender-sensitive, and community-centered manner.

2. Institutional Overview

The RREA) has been designated as the implementing agency for the off-grid component of the Liberia Electricity Sector Strengthening and Access Project (LESSAP) Phase II. Although project implementation is yet to commence, RREA is responsible for ensuring that all environmental and social (E&S) safeguards are fully embedded into project

planning, preparation, and execution in accordance with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF).

The Environmental and Social Unit at RREA is responsible for environmental and social risk management, stakeholder engagement, grievance redress, contractor supervision, gender integration, and ensuring compliance with both national regulations and the applicable World Bank Environmental and Social Standards (ESS). The current team includes a Social Safeguard Specialist, supported by a Gender Assistant, Environmental Assistant, Social Safeguard Assistant, and an Occupational Health and Safety Intern. These personnel are engaged under separate employment arrangements and have supported previous and ongoing donor-funded operations.

At present, the team operates without a formally recruited Environmental Safeguard Specialist, following unforeseen circumstances that created a vacancy in this key role. In the interim, the Social Safeguard Specialist has assumed additional responsibilities to ensure continuity of environmental oversight. While this arrangement has maintained operational momentum, the scope and complexity of LESSAP Phase II highlights the importance of formally filling this role to restore balance, enhance technical depth, and strengthen environmental compliance.

This Capacity Needs Assessment Manual has been developed in anticipation of these evolving roles and responsibilities, ensuring that the E&S Unit is well-positioned to lead the safeguards component of the project from its onset. The next section provides a detailed overview of the current staffing structure, capacity levels, and technical reinforcement needs within the Unit.

2.1. Current Staffing and Functional Capacity

At present, the E&S Unit comprises six personnel, each with defined responsibilities spanning environmental and social safeguards, gender inclusion, grievance management, and occupational health and safety. Notably, there is currently no formally recruited Environmental Safeguard Specialist; these responsibilities are being temporarily overseen by the Social Safeguard Specialist, who brings over 27 years of professional experience, including 12 years exclusively with RREA and in the environmental and social (E&S) sector. He holds a degree in Sociology and has completed advanced certifications in environmental and social risk management, occupational health and safety, energy policy, gender mainstreaming, and project monitoring and evaluation. His broad technical and field-based experience has been applied in multiple roles under national and internationally funded programs—including as Environmental and Socioeconomic Expert, Gender Expert, Social Risk Specialist, MRV Expert, and National Energy Expert—across World Bank, AfDB, USAID, UNEP, BGFA, and EU-supported projects. His leadership has been instrumental in implementing key donor-funded initiatives such as the Liberia Renewable

Energy Access Project (LIRENAP), the Lighting Lives Liberia Project, and the Yandohun Mini Hydro Project. In addition to his core technical functions, he plays a vital mentorship role, supporting junior staff with two to four years of professional experience through practical coaching, peer learning, and institutional knowledge sharing.

The Social Safeguard Assistant holds a bachelor's degree in biology and chemistry and has accumulated four years of practical experience supporting safeguards implementation at RREA. She is actively involved in community outreach, grievance intake and tracking, and supporting inclusive consultations across all RREA implemented donor-funded energy access projects. The Environmental Assistant, with a bachelor's degree in environmental science and two years of hands-on experience, plays a key role in field inspections, compliance tracking, and supporting ESMP implementation. Meanwhile, the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Intern holds a bachelor's degree in environmental science and brings a combined three years of experience—one year with RREA and two years in similar roles elsewhere. She supports site-level safety checks, hazard identification, and field-level incident logging. These junior professionals bring energy and technical grounding to the E&S Unit, and with targeted mentorship and capacity-building, they are well positioned to contribute meaningfully to the implementation of LESSAP Phase II.

As LESSAP Phase II moves toward implementation, the recruitment of a dedicated Environmental Safeguard Specialist is strongly recommended to ensure balanced task distribution and technical coverage. While the current team has made significant contributions to ongoing and past World Bank-financed initiatives, including LESSAP Phase I, the expanded scope of Phase II necessitates a comprehensive review of both individual and collective capacities. All personnel are expected to deepen their understanding of the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standards (ESS), and to effectively implement mitigation measures in accordance with the project's Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and Liberia's environmental regulatory framework.

In addition to broader institutional considerations, several short-term capacity needs have been identified, particularly among assistant-level staff. These include the need to strengthen proficiency in the use of digital tools such as Kobo Toolbox and ODK for environmental and social screening, real-time data collection, and safeguards reporting. Assistant staff would also benefit from additional training in preparing regulatory-compliant reports and effectively engaging with institutions such as the EPA and Ministry of Gender. Furthermore, developing capacity in conflict-sensitive consultation, community negotiation, and stakeholder engagement is essential to promoting inclusive and respectful field engagement. Establishing a structured system for knowledge continuity and cross-coverage during staff turnover or peak implementation periods will further enhance operational resilience. Specific support is also needed to build assistant-level capacity in safeguards-related due diligence processes, including contributions to procurement reviews, support to bid document preparation, and contractor compliance monitoring.

Additionally, as issues such as electronic waste (e-waste) emerge as key environmental concerns under off-grid electrification, the E&S Unit must be adequately equipped to understand and support mitigation measures—particularly in the absence of formal national regulations.

The table below provides a detailed summary of each staff member’s role, key duties, current capacity status, and specific training needs, with cross-cutting recommendations applicable across the Unit.

Capacity Needs Assessment Table – RREA E&S Unit (LESSAP Phase II)

Staff Position	Academic Qualification & Experience	Core Responsibilities	Current Capacity Level
To be recruited: Environmental Safeguard Specialist	(field to be determined upon recruitment)	Environmental screening, ESMP implementation, contractor oversight, supervision of environmental assistants	Not onboarded
Social Safeguard Specialist	B.A. in Sociology; 27 years' experience (12 with RREA in the E&S sector)	Social risk management, stakeholder engagement, GRM, procurement input, contractor oversight, mentoring junior staff	Advanced
Gender Assistant	B.Sc. in Economics; approx. 3 years' experience	Gender mainstreaming, inclusive consultation, GBV/SEA coordination	Medium
Environmental Assistant	B.Sc. in Environmental Science; 2 years' experience	Field inspections, data collection, ESMP support, compliance tracking	Medium
Social Safeguard Assistant	B.Sc. in Biology and Chemistry; 4 years' experience with RREA	Community outreach, grievance intake & tracking, support for consultations	Medium
Occupational Health & Safety Intern	B.Sc. in Environmental Science; 3 years total experience (1 with RREA, 2 with the Ministry of Public Work	Site safety checks, hazard identification, incident	Medium

		logging, field-level OHS support	
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While the E&S Unit has a solid foundation, key capacity gaps remain among junior staff despite their relevant academic backgrounds and growing experience. Areas needing further support include the practical application of ESS, procurement-related safeguards, bid integration, contractor oversight, and preparedness for emerging issues like e-waste management. These gaps inform the targeted, role-specific training approach outlined in the Capacity Development Plan in Section 6.

3. Assessment Methodology

To ensure a practical and evidence-based approach, RREA, through its Environmental and Social (E&S) Unit, undertook this Capacity Needs Assessment in alignment with the requirements of the RREA Project Agreement under LESSAP Phase II. The process was guided by the provisions of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).

The assessment began with a detailed internal review of the current staffing structure, roles, and functional responsibilities within the E&S Unit. This included consultations with team members and a review of lessons learned from similar World Bank–financed projects previously implemented by RREA, including LESSAP Phase I, LIRENAP, and the Lighting Lives Liberia Project. RREA analyzed staff profiles based on academic qualifications, years of experience, and actual involvement in core safeguard functions such as stakeholder engagement, grievance redress, contractor supervision, gender mainstreaming, and compliance monitoring.

We mapped each staff member's current capacity against the technical demands anticipated under LESSAP Phase II. This included identifying specific gaps related to safeguards implementation, regulatory compliance, procurement integration, and field-level monitoring. Both institutional self-assessment and role-based analysis were employed to ensure objectivity and relevance.

This participatory and forward-looking approach has allowed RREA to develop a realistic, role-specific Capacity Development Plan that reflects the evolving needs of the E&S Unit and positions the team to effectively lead safeguards implementation during LESSAP Phase II.

4. Key Areas of Capacity

4.1. Environmental and Social Risk Management

Effective environmental and social risk management will be essential to the successful implementation of LESSAP Phase II, particularly given the project's expanded scope and geographical reach. The Environmental and Social (E&S) Unit is expected to demonstrate core competencies in line with national regulatory requirements and the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF).

Key capacity areas include a solid understanding of applicable Environmental and Social Standards (ESS), particularly their operationalization within Liberia’s legal and institutional context. The ability to apply mitigation measures outlined in the project-specific Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) is critical—especially through integration into procurement procedures, bid documentation, and technical planning processes.

The E&S Unit should also be proficient in using recognized risk screening tools, environmental and social classification systems, and impact assessment methodologies consistent with World Bank guidance and national environmental legislation. Given the emerging relevance of electronic waste (e-waste) in off-grid electrification efforts—and the current absence of a national regulatory framework—awareness and preparedness to identify, monitor, and respond to e-waste risks will be increasingly important.

Finally, capacity in the use of digital tools such as Kobo Toolbox and ODK for field data collection, compliance tracking, and real-time reporting is expected. The consistent application of standardized templates and monitoring systems will support evidence-based decision-making and ensure alignment with donor and regulatory reporting requirements.

The training will also include land acquisition and resettlement documentation procedures to ensure staff are fully equipped to apply ESS5 requirements under the project, even in cases where land is acquired through voluntary or negotiated means.

4.2. Stakeholder Engagement and GRM

The E&S Unit of RREA is expected to demonstrate strengthened capacity in managing environmental and social risks under LESSAP Phase II. This includes applying World Bank Standards ESF, integrating safeguards into procurement and bid processes, and addressing emerging concerns such as e-waste management. Staff must also enhance their use of digital tools for screening, monitoring, and reporting.

In terms of stakeholder engagement, the Unit should lead inclusive consultations, operate a responsive GRM, and apply ESS10 in field contexts—particularly using conflict-sensitive approaches and digital grievance tracking systems.

Effective contractor supervision is essential. This involves enforcing E&S clauses in contracts, ensuring due diligence during procurement, monitoring site-level compliance with ESMPs, and coordinating with authorities like the EPA and Ministry of Gender. These competencies are central to maintaining safeguards compliance and ensuring community-centered energy development.

4.3. Contractor Supervision

As implementation of LESSAP Phase II approaches, effective contractor supervision will be essential to ensure full adherence to environmental and social safeguards during

construction and operational phases. The RREA E&S Unit will need to strengthen its capacity in the following areas:

- Familiarity with environmental and social (E&S) clauses integrated into contractor agreements, including provisions related to labor conditions, occupational health and safety (OHS), gender-based violence (GBV), and environmental compliance as required by the World Bank's ESF and Liberia's national legislation.
- Ability to monitor contractor compliance with the ESMP), including supervision of adherence to the project's Code of Conduct, site-specific mitigation measures, and international labor standards.
- Skills to detect, report, and follow up on instances of non-compliance, and the ability to initiate timely and appropriate corrective actions in coordination with project management, contractors, and relevant authorities.

These supervisory functions are critical to safeguarding community wellbeing, ensuring environmental protection, and promoting accountability among service providers under the LESSAP II project.

4.4. Reporting and Documentation

Effective reporting is essential for safeguards management under LESSAP Phase II. The E&S Unit must be capable of producing compliant reports, using standardized tools for documentation, and analyzing field data to inform decisions. These skills ensure transparency, support adaptive management, and drive continuous improvement in safeguards implementation.

4.5. Gender and Vulnerability Inclusion

LESSAP Phase II emphasizes inclusive access to energy, requiring the E&S Unit to integrate gender and vulnerability considerations. Key capabilities include gender-sensitive planning, GBV/SEA risk management, and inclusive consultation with marginalized groups. These skills are essential to ensure equitable, safe, and community-driven project outcomes.

5. Identified Capacity Gaps

As part of our preparatory work for LESSAP Phase II, we conducted a structured assessment of the current capacity within the Environmental and Social (E&S) Unit at RREA. This exercise enabled us to identify several gaps that may affect our ability to implement environmental and social safeguards effectively and in full alignment with national regulations and the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). One of the most significant gaps we identified is the absence of a formally recruited Environmental Safeguard Specialist. Although this role is currently being managed on an interim basis, the lack of a dedicated technical lead has placed an additional burden on existing staff and limits our capacity to provide specialized environmental oversight. Addressing this gap is a priority to ensure balanced task distribution and improved technical depth as we move into implementation.

At the assistant and junior staff levels, we recognized the need to strengthen the practical application of the World Bank’s Environmental and Social Standards, particularly ESS1, ESS4, ESS5, and ESS10. Our team requires further support to effectively integrate these standards into procurement processes, bid evaluations, and contractor oversight mechanisms.

We also noted limitations in digital proficiency, especially in the use of tools like Kobo Toolbox and ODK for environmental and social screening, compliance monitoring, and real-time reporting. Enhancing these skills will enable us to improve field documentation and align our reporting practices with donor expectations.

Emerging issues such as electronic waste (e-waste) management also present a knowledge gap. In the absence of a national regulatory framework on e-waste, we acknowledge the need to build internal capacity to anticipate, monitor, and respond to such risks—particularly in the context of off-grid electrification.

Additionally, we identified the importance of building institutional resilience through better knowledge management systems, cross-functional support, and peer-to-peer mentorship. These elements are vital for maintaining continuity in safeguards implementation during staff transitions or periods of increased activity.

The Capacity Development Plan presented in the following section has been designed to directly address these gaps. It outlines a practical and role-specific roadmap to equip our team with the tools, skills, and systems needed to deliver on the safeguards commitments under LESSAP Phase II.

6. Capacity Development Plan

To ensure that the E&S) Unit of the RREA is fully equipped to implement the LESSAP Phase II, we have developed a structured and phased Capacity Development Plan. This plan builds on lessons learned from LESSAP Phase I and incorporates evolving capacity needs related to expanded off-grid operations, national mandates, and global best practices in safeguards implementation.

The approach emphasizes role-specific training, strengthening of internal systems, and improved institutional resilience. The plan ensures that all capacity-building efforts are not only practical and scalable but also aligned with Liberia’s environmental regulations and the World Bank’s Environmental and Social Framework (ESF).

Core Components of the Capacity Development Plan

- **Targeted Training on Core World Bank Standards:** Staff will receive targeted training on the application of ESS, as well as their alignment with national laws and RREA’s operational procedures.

- **Integration of Safeguards into Procurement Processes:** Training will focus on embedding E&S requirements into procurement documents, conducting safeguards due diligence, and evaluating contractors' readiness to comply with ESMF provisions.
- **Strengthening Contractor Oversight Capacity:** The plan will build capacity for real-time supervision of contractor safeguards performance, with emphasis on the use of standardized monitoring tools, OHS enforcement, labor standards, and the responsible management of electronic waste (e-waste)—a growing concern in Liberia's off-grid sector, particularly given the absence of a formal regulatory framework.
- **Standardization of Tools and Reporting Procedures:** Staff will be equipped with both paper-based and digital monitoring tools, including Kobo Toolbox and ODK, to improve the consistency and accuracy of ESMP supervision, stakeholder tracking, and grievance documentation across all project sites.
- **Thematic Training on Stakeholder Engagement, GRM, and GBV/SEA Risk Mitigation:** Dedicated sessions will cover inclusive consultation methods, gender-sensitive engagement, grievance resolution, and GBV/SEA prevention and referral protocols in accordance with national and World Bank standards.
- **Structured Mentorship and Internal Knowledge Sharing:** Junior staff will continue to be mentored by more experienced team members to promote skills transfer, ensure coverage during periods of transition, and reinforce team cohesion. Post-training briefings and peer exchange sessions will be encouraged to institutionalize learning.
- **E-Waste Management Preparedness:** Recognizing the gap in national regulation, the E&S Unit will be proactively trained to identify, monitor, and manage e-waste risks associated with solar mini-grids, battery storage systems, and related components in line with donor expectations and global good practice.
- **Interagency Coordination:** Capacity will also be enhanced to strengthen collaboration with key institutions including the EPA, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Labor, and local authorities to ensure inter-institutional alignment and regulatory compliance.
- **Incorporating Climate Resilience into Safeguards:** Staff will receive training on climate risk screening and the integration of resilience-building measures into safeguards implementation, particularly for project sites located in vulnerable or environmentally sensitive areas.

- **Training on Land Acquisition and RAP Implementation:** In line with ESCP Commitment CS4 and ESS5, the training program will include a dedicated module on land acquisition processes, including voluntary land donation and willing-buyer-willing-seller transactions. The session will emphasize documentation, verification, and due diligence procedures consistent with the World Bank’s ESS5 and Liberia’s Land Rights Act. The training will also build capacity for implementing, monitoring, and reporting on Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs) and ensuring that any land-related transactions are properly recorded, disclosed, and compliant with safeguards requirements.

This comprehensive Capacity Development Plan provides a clear, forward-looking framework for equipping the E&S Unit to lead safeguards implementation under LESSAP Phase II. Beyond meeting immediate technical needs, the plan is designed to strengthen long-term institutional readiness, ensure compliance, and foster inclusive, climate-resilient, and community-centered development outcomes.

6.1. Proposed Training and Capacity-Building Budget

The table below provides an indicative training and capacity-building budget based on the activities outlined in the Capacity Development Plan. This proposed amount is meant solely to serve as a guideline and offer a better understanding of the potential costs associated with training implementation. Actual training costs may vary depending on the training provider, location (especially for training conducted outside Liberia), and level of technical specialization. Additionally, this budget excludes costs related to per diem, airfare, accommodation, or other logistical expenses.

Table 1: Proposed Training Activities and Costs

#	Training Theme	Key Topics	Target Participants	Delivery Modality & Timeline	Unit Cost (USD)	Total Cost (USD)	Expected Outcomes
1	World Bank ESS & National Regulations	ESS, EPA/EPML compliance	All E&S Unit Staff (6)	1 International workshop (initial)	1,500/person	9,000	Improved understanding of safeguards frameworks & legal obligations
2	Environmental & Social Risk Screening	Site screening tools, risk ranking, ESMP linkage	All E&S Unit Staff (6)	1 International session	1,000/person	2,000	Capacity to assess risks and apply mitigation plans in the field

3	Stakeholder Engagement & GRM	ESS10, inclusive consultations, GRM tracking	Social Safeguard Assistant, Gender Assistant,	1 National workshop (semi-annual)	800/person	2,400	Enhanced ability to engage communities and resolve grievances
4	Gender & GBV/SEA Safeguards	GAP review & update, GBV/SEA referral, inclusive planning	All E&S Staff (with focus on Gender Assistant)	Semi-annual workshop + online refresher	Included in GRM session	-	Stronger gender-responsive safeguards and GAP continuity
5	Contractor Supervision & Code of Conduct	Bid evaluation, OHS, labor standards, e-waste clauses	All E&S Unit Staff (6)	1 National session before contractor mobilization	1,000/person	6,000	Contractor compliance with ESMPs and safety protocols
6	Reporting & Safeguards Documentation	Kobo Toolbox, checklists, audit logs, ODK use	All E&S Staff including Intern (6)	1 National session (quarterly refreshers)	750/person	4,500	Consistent, donor-compliant reporting and digital data use
7	Procurement & Safeguards Due Diligence	E&S clauses in TORs, bid evaluation scoring	All E&S Unit Staff (6)	1 National technical workshop	1,200/person	4,800	Safeguards fully integrated into procurement lifecycle
8	NEBOSH/OHS Certification Prep	Risk assessment, site safety protocols, hazard audits	All E&S Unit Staff (6)	1-time online training	2,000/person	12,000	Recognized safety certification and improved field safety monitoring
9	Knowledge Sharing & Mentorship	Post-training briefings, internal coaching, peer exchange	All Staff	In-house, post-training (2 sessions)	500/session	1,000	Institutional memory transfer and capacity continuity
10	Land Acquisition and RAP Implementation	ESS5, Land Rights Act, voluntary land donation procedures, documentation	Social Safeguard Specialist, Social Assistant, Gender Assistant	National Workshop (pre-implementation)	1,000/person	3,000	Improved understanding of ESS5, land documentation, and RAP implementation compliance

		n and verification					
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Total Estimated Cost: USD 44,700

Logistics & Coordination Table

#	Logistics Item	Description	Estimated Unit Cost (USD)	Frequency/Qty	Total (USD)
1	Training Venue & Refreshments	For national/in-house sessions	500/session	4	2,000
2	Training Materials & Printing	Manuals, handouts, forms	200/session	5	1,000
3	Coordination & Facilitation	Admin support, facilitator logistics	Lump sum	1	1,000
4	Internet/Digital Access	For online training (e.g., NEBOSH)	250/person	6	1,500
5	Post-Training Evaluation	Internal knowledge assessments	Lump sum	1	1,500
6	Field Simulation Transport	Travel for site-based training	700/session	2	1,400
7	Contingency	Cost fluctuations reserve	Lump sum	1	1,900
	Total Estimated Logistics				10,900

Consolidated Budget Summary Table – LESSAP Phase II E&S Unit Capacity Development

#	Budget Category	Description	Estimated Cost (USD)
1	Training Activities	Includes 9 structured training themes (ESS, GBV/SEA, e-waste, GRM, etc.) for 6 staff	38,700
2	NEBOSH/OHS Certification	Online prep for all 6 staff	12,000
3	Logistics & Coordination Support	Venue, materials, coordination, evaluation, transport, internet, contingency	10,900
	Total Estimated Budget	<i>(Training + Certification + Logistics)</i>	61,600
	Rounded Total Budget (Adjusted)	For budgeting alignment and consistency	59,000

6.2 Recommended Training Institutions

To ensure that training under LESSAP Phase II is both impactful and aligned with the best global practices, the following institutions are recommended for various technical areas based on their credibility, relevance to safeguard roles, and availability of specialized programs:

Recommended Training Institutions for RREA E&S Unit Capacity Development

Training Institution	Focus Area(s)	Recommended Trainees from RREA E&S Unit
<u>GIMPA</u> (Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration)	- Environmental & Social Risk Management - Procurement - Stakeholder Engagement	- Social Safeguard Specialist - Environmental Safeguard Specialist - Environmental Assistants
<u>ESAMI</u> (Eastern and Southern African Management Institute)	- Environmental Compliance - Procurement Due Diligence - Monitoring and Evaluation	- Social Safeguard Specialist - Environmental Assistant
<u>GIMPA</u> (also offers Gender & Climate modules)	- Gender and Vulnerability - Stakeholder Engagement - Climate Resilience	- Gender Assistant - Social Safeguard Assistant - Environmental Assistant
<u>NEBOSH</u> (National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health)	- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Risk Assessment - Contractor Supervision	- OHS Intern - Environmental Assistant - Social Safeguard Specialist
<u>EPA Liberia</u> (Environmental Protection Agency)	- Liberia's ESIA Requirements - National Environmental Regulations	All E&S Unit staff
<u>LIPA</u> (Liberia Institute of Public Administration)	- Public Sector Ethics - Documentation - Government Protocols	- Social Safeguard Assistant - Gender Assistant
<u>World Bank Safeguards Academy</u>	- ESS Application - e-Waste Management - Digital Tools (ODK/Kobo Toolbox)	All E&S Unit staff
<u>World Bank Gender Platform</u>	- GBV/SEA Referral Systems - Gender Action Planning	- Gender Assistant - Social Safeguard Assistant
RREA Internal Mentorship Program	- Role-Specific Coaching - Field Supervision Techniques	All Assistants (mentored by Social & Environmental Specialists)

7. Monitoring Progress

To ensure that the E&S Unit of RREA successfully builds and applies the capacity required for LESSAP Phase II, a structured and adaptive monitoring framework will be implemented. This approach will track the effectiveness of training interventions and the application of skills in real-world project contexts, while remaining responsive to emerging capacity needs.

Key focus areas of monitoring will include:

- **Training Participation and Application:** Documentation of staff participation in all planned capacity-building activities, with attention to training relevance, knowledge retention, and the practical application of new skills—especially in areas such as ESF implementation, procurement due diligence, and stakeholder engagement.
- **Safeguards Integration in Procurement and Bidding:** Review of bid documents and procurement packages to ensure consistent inclusion of environmental and social (E&S) clauses. Monitoring will assess how well staff are applying safeguards-related due diligence, including contractor evaluation and compliance readiness.
- **E-Waste Management Preparedness:** Observation of field practices and staff awareness relating to e-waste identification, segregation, and handling—particularly in the absence of a formal national e-waste framework. Training follow-up will assess how these practices are being integrated into site supervision and ESMP implementation.
- **Functionality of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM):** Assessment of the GRM’s responsiveness, digital case tracking, community access, and resolution timelines. Regular reports will track volume, types of grievances, and outcomes, as well as staff capacity to manage sensitive issues.
- **Contractor Oversight and ESMP Compliance:** Field-level supervision will be tracked using standardized monitoring tools to evaluate the consistency of contractor compliance with ESMP provisions, OHS standards, and code of conduct requirements. Issues identified during site audits will be used to inform corrective actions and coaching needs.
- **Safeguards Reporting and Documentation:** Quality and timeliness of safeguards reports will be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with the World Bank and national standards. Use of digital tools (e.g., Kobo Toolbox, ODK), field checklists, and reporting templates will be monitored.

- **Staff Feedback and Continuous Learning:** Staff will participate in structured feedback sessions to evaluate training effectiveness and identify the remaining challenges. This feedback will inform updates to the capacity-building plan and allow for iterative learning throughout the project lifecycle.

8. Risk Assessment and Mitigation Measures

To ensure smooth and effective safeguards implementation under LESSAP Phase II, the manual outlines key areas where additional support and forward planning are beneficial for the RREA Environmental and Social (E&S) Unit. These are not viewed as shortcomings, but rather as opportunities for institutional strengthening, given the evolving scope of work and safeguards requirements.

The following risks and corresponding mitigation measures have been identified:

Risk Area	Description	Recommended Mitigation Measures
1. Staffing Expansion Needs	While the current E&S team is functional and dedicated, the formal recruitment of an Environmental Safeguard Specialist will be essential to support a more balanced workload and technical specialization.	Sustain the involvement of existing team members while onboarding an Environmental Safeguard Specialist. Sequence recruitment and training activities to ensure operational readiness ahead of major field activities.
2. Dual Role of the Social Safeguard Specialist	The Social Safeguard Specialist is currently supporting both social and environmental functions effectively, though this arrangement may limit depth in some technical areas as activities scale up.	Continue to leverage the Specialist's expertise to lead early-stage training, coach junior staff, and oversee safeguards rollout. Additional support and advanced training can be introduced to complement this dual role until full staffing is achieved.
3. Practical Application of ESF	Staff are familiar with the core requirements of the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), but further practical training will enhance application in the field.	Provide structured workshops with real-life case studies, field exercises, and refresher sessions to strengthen practical skills, particularly in relation to ESS1, ESS4, ESS5, and ESS10.
4. Contractor Oversight and Coordination	As implementation activities expand, staff will benefit from enhanced tools and procedures for supervising safeguards performance and coordinating with institutions such as the EPA and Ministry of Gender.	Deliver hands-on training on contractor supervision, e-waste handling, and interagency site audit procedures. Establish joint coordination protocols and clarify lines of responsibility.
5. Inclusive Safeguards Support	Junior staff and assistants play important roles but require additional support in areas such as stakeholder engagement, GBV/SEA response, and safeguards recordkeeping.	Strengthen assistant-level capacity through peer learning, practical tools, and role-specific training. Encourage internal knowledge sharing and mentorship led by experienced staff.

The continued leadership of the Social Safeguard Specialist—who brings more than two decades of experience, with 12 years exclusively in managing complex E&S systems across national and donor-funded projects—provides the foundation for effective oversight and rapid institutional development. His ongoing contribution remains central to the transition toward a more robust and well-structured E&S Unit.

9. Post-Training Impact Evaluation Plan

To ensure that capacity development efforts under LESSAP Phase II translate into measurable improvements, a structured post-training impact evaluation plan will be implemented. This evaluation framework will assess effectively staff apply newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-world project contexts, and how such application contributes to safeguards performance.

The plan includes the following components:

- **Pre- and Post-Training Assessments:** Each formal training session will be accompanied by baseline (pre-test) and outcome (post-test) assessments to evaluate knowledge gains across key topics such as ESS application, risk screening, GBV/SEA mitigation, and contractor oversight.
- **Self-Evaluation and Peer Feedback:** Staff will complete self-assessments to reflect on their confidence and capacity in applying safeguards knowledge. Supervisors and peers will also provide structured feedback on observed improvements and areas still needing support.
- **Performance Tracking:** Institutional indicators will be used to measure performance outcomes, including the number and quality of safeguards reports produced, stakeholder meetings facilitated, grievances resolved, gender action plans implemented, and contractor compliance rates.
- **Field Observation and Coaching Reviews:** Senior specialists will conduct periodic field visits and coaching sessions to observe the application of safeguards practices and provide on-the-spot guidance. These visits will also assess whether training materials and tools are being used effectively.
- **Internal Knowledge Sharing Metrics:** Staff who benefit from external training will be required to present key lessons learned through internal workshops. Evaluation will include the frequency of these sessions and the extent to which new tools and practices are adopted by peers

- **Annual Impact Review:** A consolidated review will be conducted annually to synthesize findings from all evaluations. This will inform future training priorities, staff support needs, and potential adjustments to the capacity-building strategy.

This evaluation framework ensures that training interventions are not only delivered but are also absorbed, applied, and translated into improved environmental and social performance throughout LESSAP Phase II implementation.

10. Annexes

Annex 1: Staff Capacity Survey Template

Capacity Needs Assessment Manual – LESSAP Phase II (Off-grid Component)

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Name	
Position/Title	
Department/Unit	
Date of Hire	
Highest Educational Level	
Relevant Certifications	
Contact Information (Email/Phone)	

SECTION B: TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Please rate your current level of knowledge and experience in the following areas using this scale:

1 – No experience | 2 – Basic understanding | 3 – Moderate proficiency | 4 – Advanced proficiency | 5 – Expert

Knowledge/Skill Area	Rating (1-5)	Comments/Examples of Experience
ESS1 – Environmental and Social Risk Assessment		
ESS4 – Community Health and Safety		
ESS5 – Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement		
ESS10 – Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure		
Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)		
Environmental and Social Screening		
Use of Digital Data Collection Tools (e.g., Kobo Toolbox, ODK)		
ESMP Implementation and Field Supervision		
Contractor Oversight and Safeguards Compliance		
Gender and Vulnerability Inclusion		
GBV/SEA Risk Mitigation and Response Mechanisms		
Safeguards Reporting and Documentation		

Knowledge of Liberia's E&S Legal and Regulatory Framework		
Stakeholder Consultation and Community Engagement		
Use of Monitoring Templates and Checklists		

SECTION C: TRAINING AND SUPPORT NEEDS

1. Which technical areas would you like to receive further training in? (List up to five areas)

2. Have you attended any E&S-related training in the past 12 months?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, briefly describe:

3. Preferred method of training:

☐ Workshop/In-person ☐ Online course ☐ On-the-job coaching

☐ Peer-to-peer learning ☐ Field simulation

4. Availability for training (all applicable):

☐ Weekdays ☐ Weekends ☐ Half-day sessions ☐ Full-day sessions

SECTION D: GENERAL FEEDBACK

- What support do you need to improve your performance in safeguards-related tasks?

- What challenges do you currently face in fulfilling your environmental or social responsibilities?

- Do you have suggestions for improving capacity development efforts within the E&S Unit?

Signature: _____

Date: _____